

Pawtucket School Committee Work Session

Friday, February 3, 2012

**5:00 PM-8:30 PM School Administration Building 2nd Floor
Conference Room**

286 main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860

I. Meeting will come to order

The Chairman called the work session to order at 5:10 PM.

a. Roll call

**Mr. Araujo-here; Ms. Bonollo-arrived at 5:30 PM; Mr. Coughlin-absent;
Mr. Noonan-here; Ms. Nordquist-absent; Mr. Spooner-here; Mr.
Tenreiro-here**

**Also in attendance were Mrs. Deborah Cylke, Superintendent of
Schools and Mr. Skip Jenkins, Center for Reform of School Systems.**

b. Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

None

III. Discussion Items

**Note: This is a work session. Votes on any work will be taken at a
future regular or special meeting.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: Thank you for being here and taking the time to go over
the core beliefs. I believe this is measured in student achievement.
The way we present ourselves, more professional and the end result
is with the students. I see Administrators as the problem solvers and
it filters down to the students.**

I think at the last meeting we needed to do some venting. We need to

move away from that and concentrate on professional practice.

1. Complete the work on Standards of Professional Practice

Mr. Jenkins: Thank you for having us back. We are going to try to concentrate on standards of professional practice.

The most important part of this practice is core belief and public practice. That drives and how you hold yourself accountable to the public.

Board Meetings and Sessions:

Mrs. Cylke: The standards of professional practice are not anyone's in particular.

Mr. Jenkins: This is a compilation of districts from all over the Nation.

Mr. Noonan: I like everything here. Could we add "if everyone so chooses?"

Mr. Tenreiro: If you're on the losing side of the vote and to consensus I'll say, "I spoke my peace at the meeting, but the Committee said at the meeting..."

Mr. Noonan: Returning the right to speak to the media, but as a member, if a board member preface comment being made solely as a member and not as a member of the board.

Mr. Jenkins: You might consider: I respect the process and my colleagues. I'm going to pass on making any comment until we have a chance to discuss it as a whole.

Mr. Spooner: In a perfect world that would be beautiful. I would never go to the press off the record.

Mr. Jenkins: You can't stop anyone. You can censure and hold

yourself responsible to the public.

Mr. Tenreiro: As much as possible defer to the chairman.

Mrs. Cylke: You have to respect the democratic process.

Mr. Araujo: Should it read board chair instead of president?

**Mr. Noonan: The last bullet, “ejecting a person, could we add
“elected officials should not be shut off at any time.”**

Placing Items on Agenda:

The Superintendent and the Committee Chairman

**Mr. Jenkins: Members have the time to get knowledge to have it
before the meeting?**

Mr. Araujo: There should be a distinct cut off to receive the agenda.

**Mrs. Cylke: In my previous district it worked where the Committee
received the packet 10 days before the meeting.**

**Mr. Spooner: I thought we passed something to get it the Wednesday
before.**

Ms. Bonollo: That cuts off the opportunity to investigate.

**Mr. Jenkins: Is there any time you wouldn't have an item where you
wouldn't have an item put on?**

**Mr. Tenreiro: No—if a member put something on that crossed the line
on management.**

**Mr. Jenkins: You have a rogue member that really is not on point and
not the priority of the board and takes away from your core mission
and is only of interest of that board member.**

Mr. Tenreiro: We don't get that right now.

Mr. Jenkins: We do suggest you do show a sense of respect.

Address each other as Mr. and Mrs., it shows a sense of formality.

Mrs. Cylke: A first reading is assuming the members have read it.

Mr. Noonan: Board policies, do we have to read them out loud?

Mr. Tenreiro: No, the first reading is done. You don't have to read it.

Mr. Jenkins: Some boards prior to going into policy, the chair makes a comment—"members have had an opportunity to review and have been reviewed by legal counsel, are there any questions or revisions at this time?"

Mr. Spooner: Questions and comments must always be genuine but people don't always let it go.

Mr. Jenkins: Board president and attorney can always say it's a violation of the OMA. Polling is done for convenience or that the board is ready to address the issue.

Mr. Araujo: Public participation, the meeting is with the members not with the public. A parent spoke and a member engaged in conversation.

Mr. Jenkins: You can't deal with an issue that hasn't been advertised and the public noticed.

Mr. Tenreiro: You can't fully deliberate and discuss the matter.

Executive Session:

Mr. Tenreiro: Votes will be announced and the clerk will keep a record of those pending.

New Board:

Election and transition of officers: Business as usual in January at organizational meeting.

Concerns and Complaints:

Mr. Tenreiro: Fidelity and trust—addressing the elephant in the room.

Mr. Jenkins: The Superintendent becomes one voice. She starts hearing from every board member.

Mr. Tenreiro: That board member has a problem with the Superintendent. So any board member who isn't abiding by these rules?

Mr. Jenkins: We are professionals and respecting these rules. What I tell my members is if you have a problem with the Superintendent talk to me first, instead of putting the Superintendent on the defensive.

Mrs. Cylke: I want to be comfortable and want them to go to Alan and Alan could come to me.

Mr. Jenkins: The board manages the Superintendent, not the individual board members manage the Superintendent.

Personnel Appointments:

Mr. Noonan: I'm staying away from this. That's for the Superintendent.

Mr. Araujo: That's what we hold the Superintendent accountable for.

Employee Grievances:

Mr. Jenkins: New board member shows up at a school. It's really difficult to say, you really can't go further. This might be a grievance issue and if we talk about it I can't go with you.

Mr. Tenreiro: We need to go on the background.

Mr. Jenkins: There is a problem with board members showing up unannounced at a school.

Mr. Tenreiro: During the functioning school day, the contract is Superintendent first.

Mrs. Cylke: As a professional courtesy, I like to know when they're

coming to clear my calendar.

Mr. Tenreiro: We should look at a request policy for information.

Mr. Noonan moved to recess for a short break at 7:10 PM. **Mr. Araujo** seconded.

Voice vote carried all in favor.

The Chairman reconvened the work session at 7:21 PM.

Roll call

Mr. Araujo-here; **Ms. Bonollo**-here; **Mr. Noonan**-here; **Mr. Spooner**-here; **Mr. Tenreiro**-here

2. Core Beliefs and Commitments

Mr. Jenkins: The goal is that this committee adopts a core set of beliefs and commitments to hold yourself to those beliefs and putting into specific set of actions that you're willing to be held accountable for.

Core Beliefs:

Mr. Jenkins: The School Committee has to have a common set of core beliefs. Do you believe that all children have an opportunity for an education? What about the potential of school districts to be high performing? Why should we have core beliefs?

It is vital for a school committee to openly state that all students can openly achieve at high levels and its commitment to helping them do so.

Core beliefs and commitments provide clarity and direction for school committee, the district and community.

Core beliefs drive behavior, theory of action, policies, budget decision, etc.

Mr. Tenreiro: Student, parent systemic problem that can move the district to that 10,000 ft. level.

Mr. Jenkins: We have data that you can focus on to set your goals.

Mrs. Cylke: The NECAP data came out and from this point on, I feel I own it. Literacy, you can see improvement. I believe we can move it.

Mr. Jenkins: What if the committee's core belief was every student could be a violinist?

Mrs. Cylke: We'd buy a violin.

Mr. Jenkins: Tons of districts that embrace black kids, poor kids, Hispanic kids that can achieve.

Mr. Spooner: When I attended school, it was a learning institution. It's so different now.

Mr. Jenkins: What you believe matters.

Mission/Vision/Core Beliefs:

Mr. Jenkins: A mission and vision without core beliefs does not have any weight.

-All children at grade level

-All children to potential

-No achievement gaps

-Effective gaps

-Effective school districts

Pawtucket Achievement Gap:

8th grade Math, Science and Reading showed that 13 year olds the white and black student gap is starting to close over the last 40 years in reading achievement.

In the Hispanic student data there is virtually no improvement over 40

years.

Math proficiency shows no significant improvement over the last 40 years.

Rhode Island Achievement Gap:

8th graders in 2011 show that 24% of all students are below the basic level and 34% are at or above proficient.

Mr. Noonan left at 7:58 PM.

Mr. Spooner: I'm concerned about teaching each group of students, especially ELL and we can't forget those that are doing well.

Mr. Tenreiro: We are trying to hit the college and career ready for every student.

Mr. Jenkins: The pace of progress is incremental and slow. At the current rate, it will take more than two decades to close the white minority gap in eliminating math and reading nationally and countless years to prepare all students for post secondary success.

Why do these gaps matter?

All children deserve equal opportunity.

The future will bring of our nation, of our state and our communities depends on the ability of public schools to provide all children with an education that will prepare them for post secondary education.

Projected Proportion:

2000 – White 70%	2040 – 51%
------------------	------------

Enrollment in Public Schools:

2000 – White 62%	2050-White 38%
------------------	----------------

Hispanic 16%

Hispanic 38%

White's not replenishing or repopulating.

Low expectations are enabling our kids throughout.

Mr. Spooner: I believe children are a product of their environment. If they grow up in an environment where their parents are hard working people with good values, I believe they too, will have a better chance at achieving. If they come from a single family home and their parent receives assistance, the chances of that child doing the same thing are greater. That child doesn't know any other way and the parent keeps having children to continue getting the assistance—medical, food vouchers, a college education, and daycare. Why go to work? There aren't any jobs out there now. Grandparents are raising their grandchildren today.

Mrs. Cylke: Hispanic students see their parents working very hard. Hard work equals a good work ethic and with a good work ethic they see opportunity.

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Araujo moved to adjourn. Ms. Bonollo seconded.

Voice vote carried all in favor.

The Chairman adjourned the Pawtucket School Committee Work Session of February 3, 2012 at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clerk

APPROVED March 13, 2012